

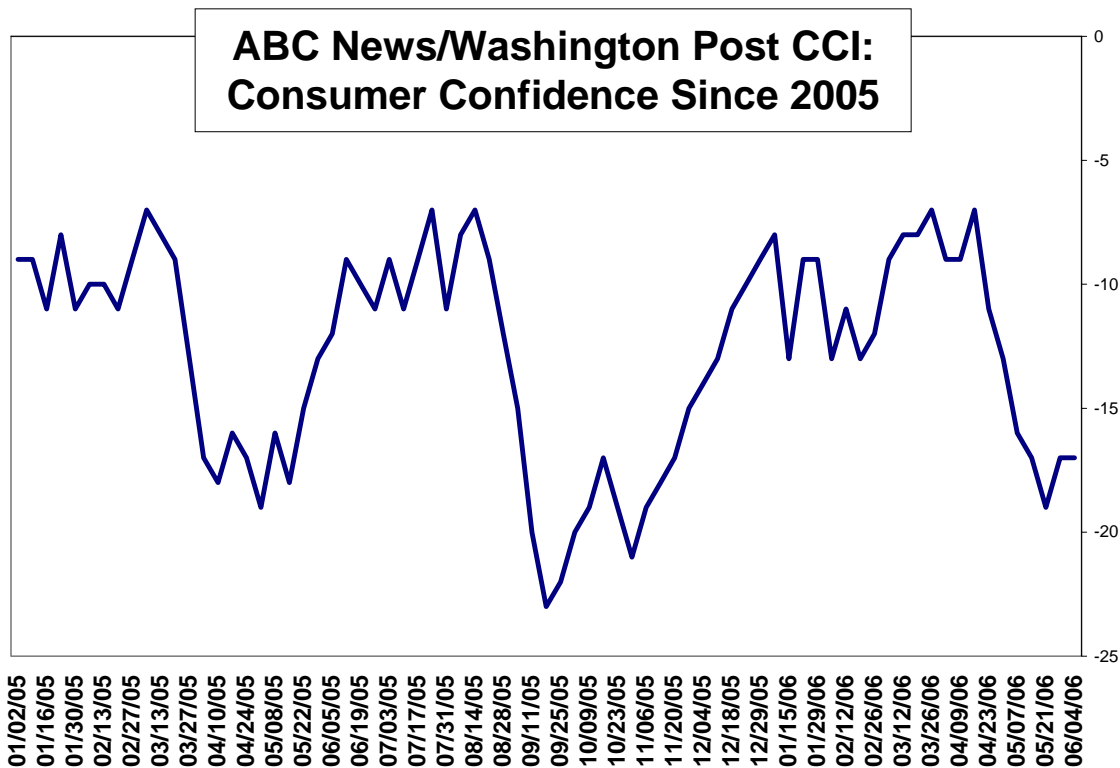
Gas Prices, Slow Job Growth Keep Consumer Confidence Down

Consumer confidence held steady this week, hovering near its lowest in seven months, consistent with high gas prices and weak job growth.

The ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index stands at -17 on its scale of +100 to -100. It's stayed between -16 and -19 the past five weeks, a period in which gasoline prices likewise have been steady, albeit high, after jumping earlier in the spring.

The index had tied its 2006 high in mid-April, -7, before starting its descent. Gas is up more than 30 cents a gallon since early April, and nearly 80 cents higher than a year ago.

The Department of Labor last week reported 75,000 new jobs in May – the weakest gains in employment since October, when the labor market took a hit after Hurricane Katrina. The department also revised downward its March and April job growth estimates.

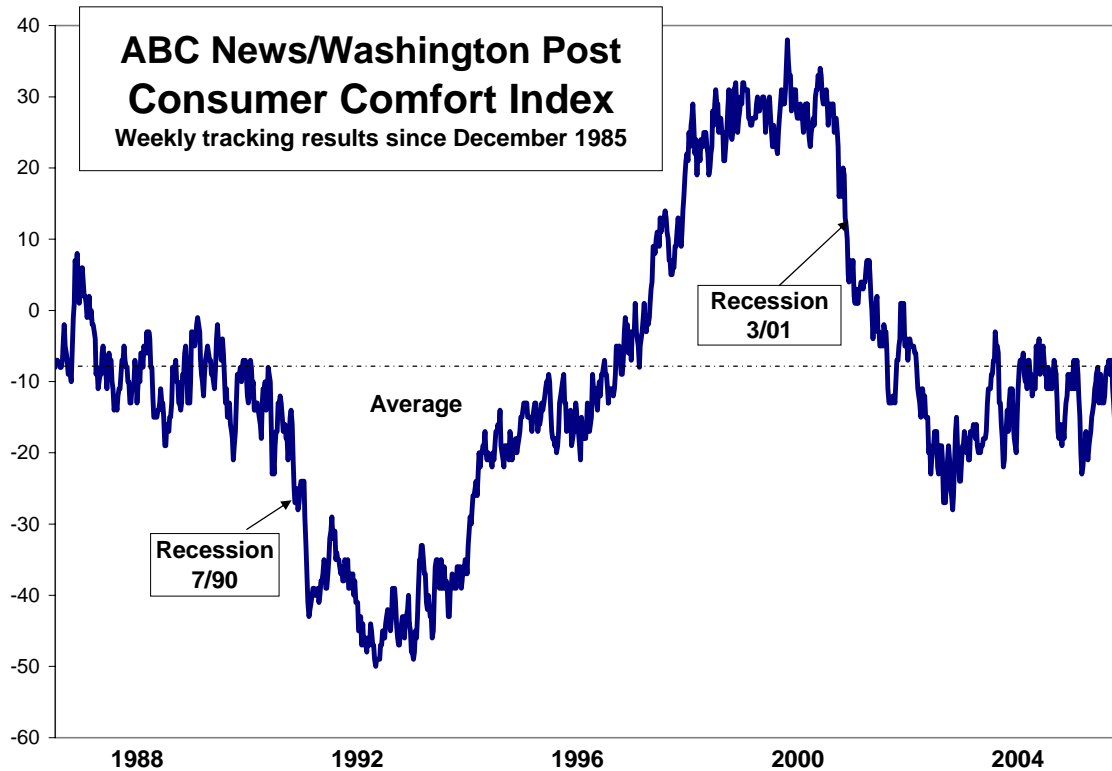


INDEX – The weekly ABC/Post index is based on Americans' ratings of the national economy, the buying climate and personal finances. This week 35 percent rate the

economy positively, five points below the long-term average; 34 percent call it a good time to buy things, four points below average; and 55 percent say their own finances are in good shape, closer to its average, 57 percent.

	ABC News/Washington Post CCI			
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2006 avg.	20-yr. avg.
National economy	35%	34	39	40
Buying climate	34	33	36	38
Personal finances	55	57	58	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-17	-17	-12	-9

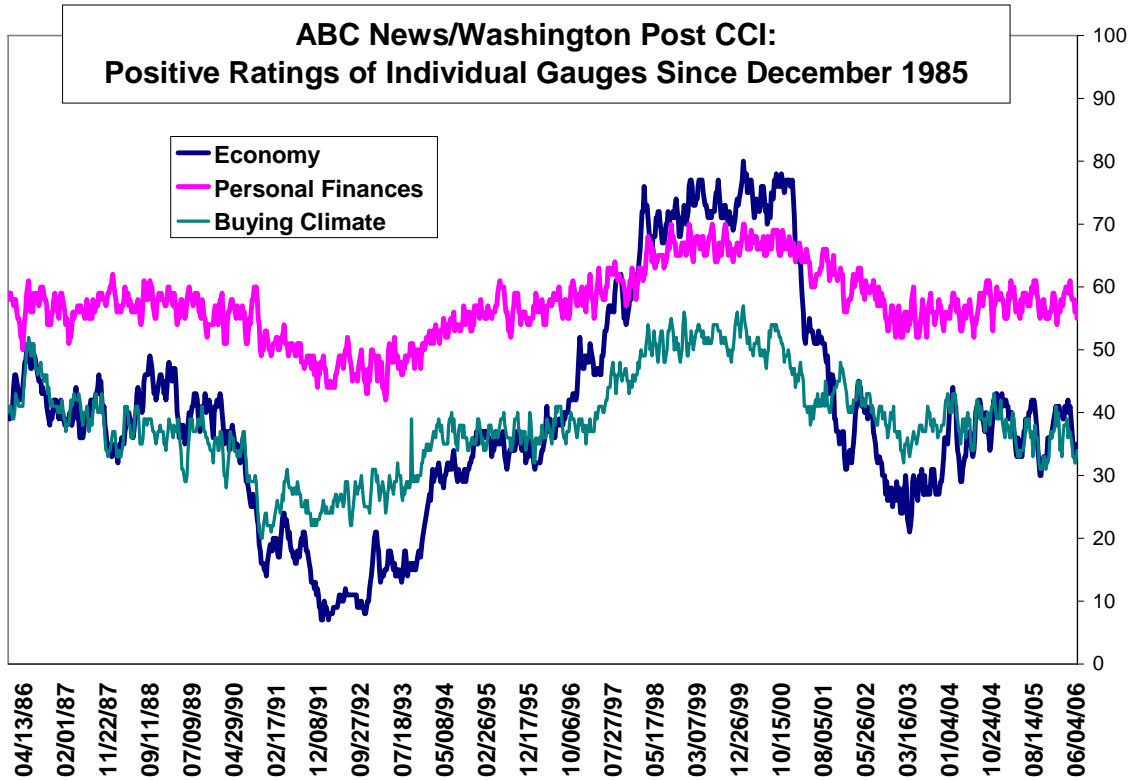
TREND –The CCI has averaged -12 so far this year, compared to its -9 since the weekly survey began in December 1985. Its all-time low stands at -50 in February 1992; its high, +38 in January 2000.



ABC/Post CCI		
Today	-17	
2006 low	-19	May 21
2006 high	-7	April 16, March 26
2006 average	-12	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-9	

GROUPS – As usual, the CCI is higher in better-off groups. It's +36 among top-income Americans while -57 among those with the lowest incomes, +2 among college graduates while -51 among those who haven't finished high school, -10 among whites but -51 among blacks and -8 among men while -25 among women.

Regionally, the index is -5 in the West compared with -19 to -22 elsewhere. It remains far higher among Republicans (+24) than among independents (-24) or particularly among Democrats (-42).



Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Post CCI:

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Thirty-five percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 34 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The lowest was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	35	4	31	65	42	23
Avg. since 12/85	40	3	37	60	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-five percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 57 percent last week. The best was 70 percent on Aug. 30, 1998, matched in January 2000. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	55	7	48	45	33	12

Avg. since 12/85 57 5 52 43 30 13

BUYING CLIMATE – Thirty-four percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 33 percent last week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	34	3	31	66	45	21
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	36	62	41	21

METHODOLOGY – Interviews for the ABC News/Washington Post Consumer Comfort Index are reported in a four-week rolling average. This week's results are based on telephone interviews among a random national sample of 1,000 adults in the four weeks ending June 4, 2006. The results have a three-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The index is derived by subtracting the negative response to each index question from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Tanveer Ali.

ABC News polls can be found online at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

06/04/06	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg

Group	-----							
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-17	-17	-16	-9	-12	-7	-23	-13
State of Economy	-30	-32	-30	-22	-26	-16	-40	-25
Personal Finances	10	14	16	18	18	22	8	15
Buying Climate	-32	-34	-34	-24	-28	-18	-38	-29

OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-8	-8	-6	2	-3	9	-14	-2
Women	-25	-26	-25	-18	-21	-11	-36	-22
Age:								
18 - 34	-17	-15	-7	-8	-16	1	-28	-11
35 - 44	-8	-14	-22	-5	-3	5	-27	-10
45 - 54	-25	-25	-18	-12	-25	-5	-31	-17
55 - 64	-8	-12	-15	-6	-10	0	-36	-13
65+	-26	-22	-26	-15	-2	-1	-31	-15
Income:								
Under \$15K	-57	-61	-52	-48	-54	-33	-72	-54
\$15K To \$24.9K	-58	-55	-54	-37	-43	-28	-65	-45
\$25K To \$39.9K	-23	-24	-33	-17	-29	-12	-44	-27

\$40K To \$49.9K	-34	-36	-11	-14	12	26	-40	-9
Over \$50K	15	13	17	26	10	26	4	17
\$50K To \$74.9K	-4	-4	9	15	-5	17	-14	3
\$75K To \$99.9K	17	17	21	26	17	37	-1	19
Over \$100K	36	30	25	41	28	50	18	35
Region:								
Northeast	-21	-15	-20	-13	-19	-5	-41	-18
Midwest	-22	-27	-27	-10	-17	-3	-29	-16
South	-19	-18	-14	-12	-1	3	-27	-12
West	-5	-8	-5	3	-19	7	-19	-6
Race:								
White	-10	-11	-11	-3	-9	-1	-18	-8
Black	-51	-49	-50	-35	-38	-25	-57	-44
Politics:								
Republican	24	26	23	32	35	38	9	27
Democrat	-42	-42	-41	-29	-37	-27	-46	-36
Independent	-24	-25	-23	-12	-21	-10	-31	-19
Education:								
< High School	-51	-52	-46	-41	-36	-23	-63	-42
High Sch. Grad.	-30	-24	-22	-19	-26	-13	-35	-23
College +	2	-2	-3	8	4	12	-9	3
Home:								
Own	-6	-8	-10	0	2	4	-17	-5
Rent	-44	-39	-34	-31	-43	-20	-49	-34
Marital Status:								
Single	-27	-27	-16	-12	-20	-8	-29	-18
Married	-3	-7	-7	1	-4	8	-14	-2
Sep/Wid/Div	-36	-31	-41	-29	-22	-22	-49	-34
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-8	-7	-3	3	-5	6	-13	-3
Part-Time	-21	-26	-21	-10	-10	-1	-29	-16
Not Employed	-29	-29	-34	-26	-22	-15	-43	-24

END